

Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes ~ May 1, 2023
On-line meeting with Zoom / approved June 6, 2023

Present:	Anastasia Douglas, David Frye, Michelle John, Steve Kieselstein, Candice Price, Jesse Suter, Crista Yagjian
Absent:	Lindsey Owen
VTDDC Staff:	Kirsten Murphy, Chelsea Hayward, Susan Aranoff

1. Welcome and Adopt Minutes:

The meeting began at 10:03 am. There was a quorum. The Executive Committee did not have meeting minutes to adopt from March or the April special meeting. It will instead adopt these minutes at the next meeting.

2. Legislative Update with Susan Aranoff:

Prior to the meeting, Kirsten circulated 2 draft letters based on input from members at the March Quarterly meeting (attached). One is about restraint and seclusion in schools; the other is about the need for an increase for Developmental Disabilities Services in the state budget.

Susan opened her presentation noting that this is the start of the two-year biennium.

- **More inclusive/equitable schools.** The Council has supported the recommendations of the Act 35 Task Force, which focused on reducing the use of exclusionary discipline in schools. Sue was a member of this group.

The Policy Committee recently discussed the issue of restraint and seclusion in schools. There is a range of opinions about what the best alternative strategies are. Vermont uses Multi-tiered Systems of Support and Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS). The Policy Committee has suggested that VTDDC convene a forum to discuss PBIS and to develop a common understanding of the issues around restraint and seclusion. The Executive Committee agreed this would be timely and helpful.

The Executive Committee decided to hold the letter about restraint and seclusion if or until there was a more clear and informed consensus among members.

- **Other VTDDC’s platform items.** Susan reviewed other platform items and summarized many “wins” for this legislative session.

- Both the House and the Senate have agreed to fund additional quality oversight for DAIL programs.
 - The House agreed to a 4% increase for DDS; the Senate budget has a 5% increase. The final percentage will be decided by a Committee of Conference that includes 3 House members and 3 Senate members. Overall, the increase is disappointing, since 10% is really needed.
 - There appears to be language in S. 100 directing that some of the many millions in funding for housing be used to develop housing for people with disabilities.
- **S. 89, creation of a forensic facility.** This bill would create a “forensic facility” next to the state psychiatric hospital in Berlin, VT. “Forensic” means something related to the court system. The proposed forensic facility would house and provide treatment and support to individuals with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, who have been charged with a crime and found “not competent” to be tried in a court. The facility would be locked; individuals living there could not go out into the community. There are currently about 27 people with I/DD who fall into this category. Most of them are served in the community. The forensic facility would only be used for those that the Agency of Human Services has decided cannot be served safely in the community.

The Policy Committee discussed S. 89 and unanimously agreed that the Council should oppose including people served by the Developmental Disabilities Service System in the bill. Council staff have testified twice in the House in opposition to the bill. It is likely that the section of the bill related to people with I/DD will be removed, but this has not been finalized.

- Kirsten asked the Committee to agree to sending the Council’s letter about funding DDS to the Budget Committee of Conference and the House Appropriation Committee.

Motion: Steve made the motion to send the letter. David seconded. There was no additional discussion. **Motion passed: 4-0-0.**

3. Chairs Report with Anastasia Douglas:

Anastasia said that she will be sending a monthly Chair’s newsletter. She asked if anyone had a strong opinion on their preference for email vs. post mail. Kirsten noted

that there are a couple of members who prefer to receive hard copies because they do not use email regularly. Braille is an option for member J. Gardner

Anastasia explained her ideas for the newsletter, It may include her personal open hours, birthdays, kudos for achievements, etc. She asked what others would like to see.

- Steve suggested sharing opportunities for folks to get involved.
- Kirsten said she would like to share national opportunities to learn more about policy issues or to share comments.
- The newsletter will go to alumni of the DD Council. Don't lose "historic knowledge" of those who had served the Council in the past (Alumni spotlight?).

Anastasia encouraged others to email her if they have other idea..

4. NACDD National Conference:

July 26-28, 2023 (with preconference events July 24-26) in Orlando, FL.

The group discussed who should attend:

- Anastasia has not attended before. She will be going and plans to attend the pre-conference training for Council Chairs.
- Amanda is interested and has not attended before. Kirsten will talk with her about what support will be helpful to her.
- David has been to the conference twice. He is acting as VTDDC's liaison to NACDD's self-advocate committee and could make helpful connections at the conference.
- Michelle said she would like to go but understood that slots were limited.

Kirsten said that the budget would likely be sufficient to cover all four members interested in attending. She will begin planning for the trip.

Anastasia mentioned that Burlington no longer has a direct flight to Florida, but Plattsburgh does. It may be more affordable and convenient.

5. Quarterly Meeting Format:

Should VTDDC use hybrid meetings permanently?

Motion: Candice made the motion to continue hybrid meetings and reassess the need in two years. Jesse seconded.
Motion passed: 6-0-0.

David congratulated Kirsten for her Ally of the Year Award from Green Mountain Self-Advocates.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:59 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chelsea Hayward
Coordinator of Communication